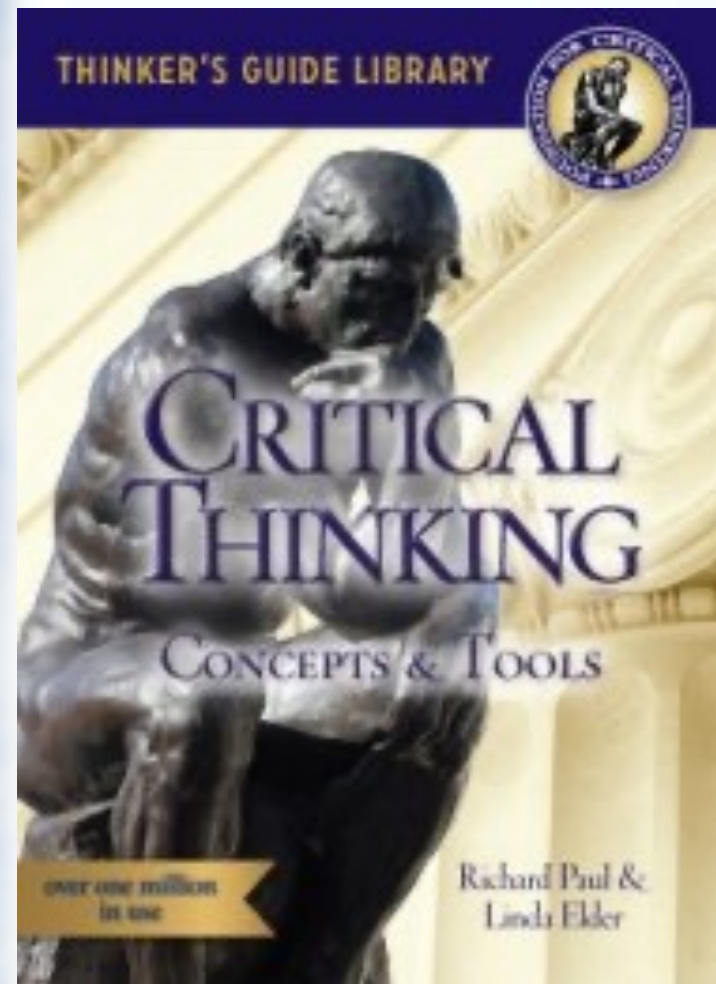# Critical Thinking

- What is Thinking?

- What makes it "Critical" Thinking?

Critical Thinking

Using whatever medium you are most comfortable with,

Explain the concept of critical thinking to one of the following: (Pick One)

- Co-worker
- Your Spouse
- Your Supervisor
- Someone Who Does Not Speak Your Language

✓ What are some of the key points you want to get across?

✓ Why would it be important for them to know?

✓ How do you see it in your mind?

✓ What makes it "Critical" Thinking?

What Is Critical Thinking?

The art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improve it.

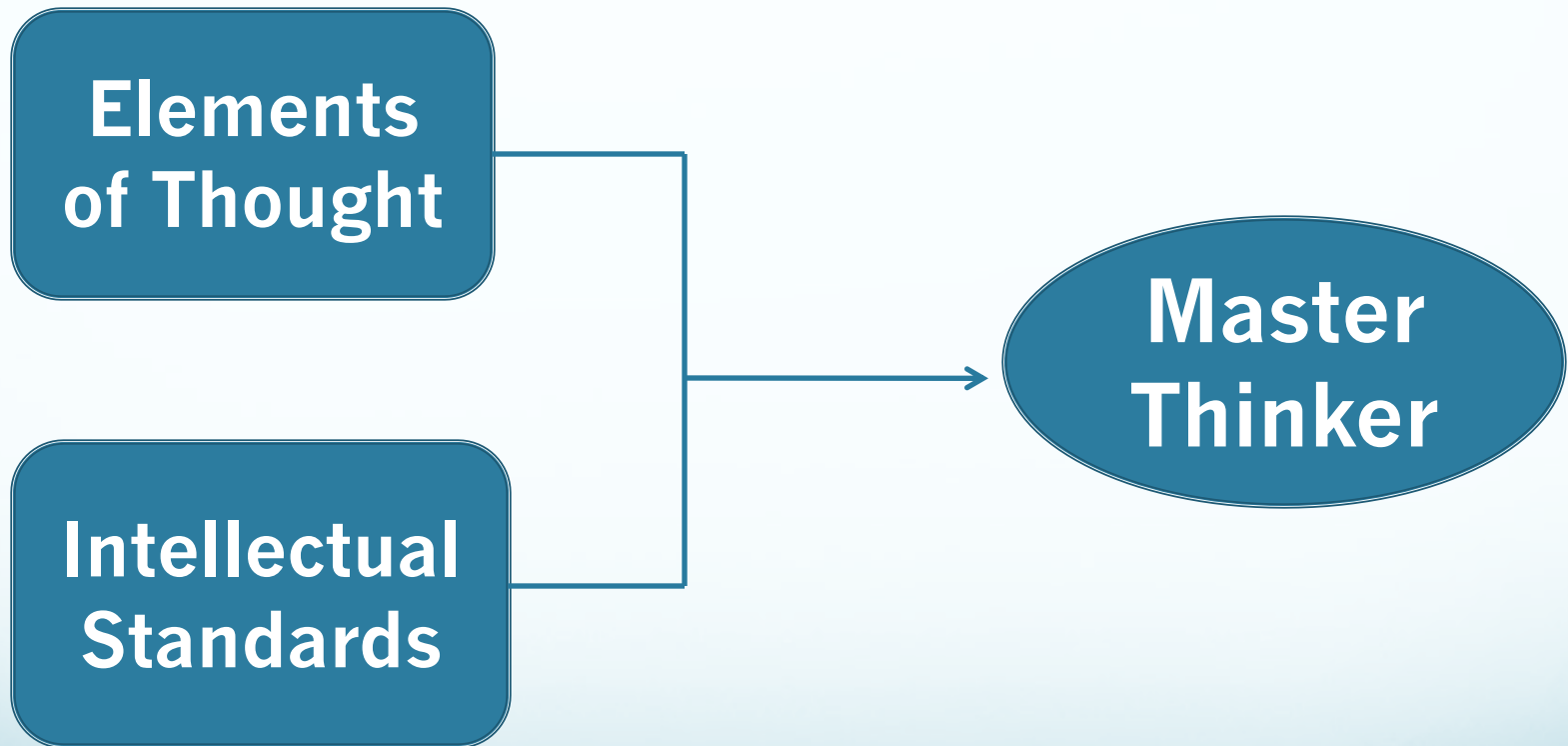*An effective critical thinker:*

- ✓ Raises vital <u>questions</u> and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely

- ✓ Gathers and assesses relevant information

- ✓ Comes to conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards

- ✓ Thinks, assessing assumptions, consequences, and

- ✓ Communicates effectively with others in figuring out solutions to complex problems
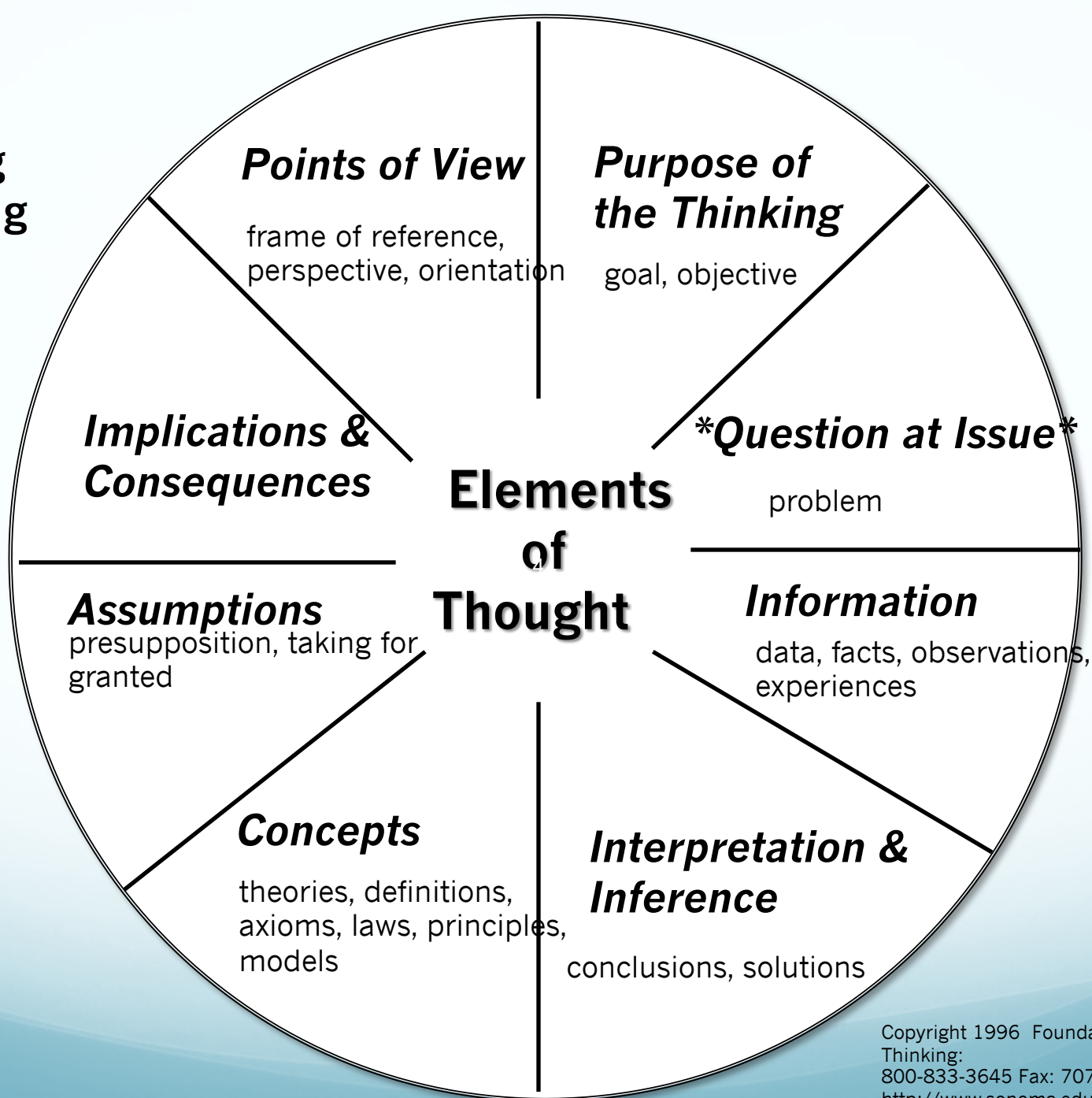
Why Critical Thinking?

Critical thinking is purposeful and reflective judgment about what to believe or what to do in response to observations, experience, verbal or written expressions, or arguments.

Developing Critical Thinking
The Paul + Elder Model

Elements of Thought

Intellectual Standards

Master Thinker

Taking Thinking Apart

Elements of Thought

Points of View
frame of reference, perspective, orientation

Purpose of the Thinking
goal, objective

Implications & Consequences

Question at Issue
problem

Assumptions
presupposition, taking for granted

Information
data, facts, observations, experiences

Concepts
theories, definitions, axioms, laws, principles, models

Interpretation & Inference
conclusions, solutions

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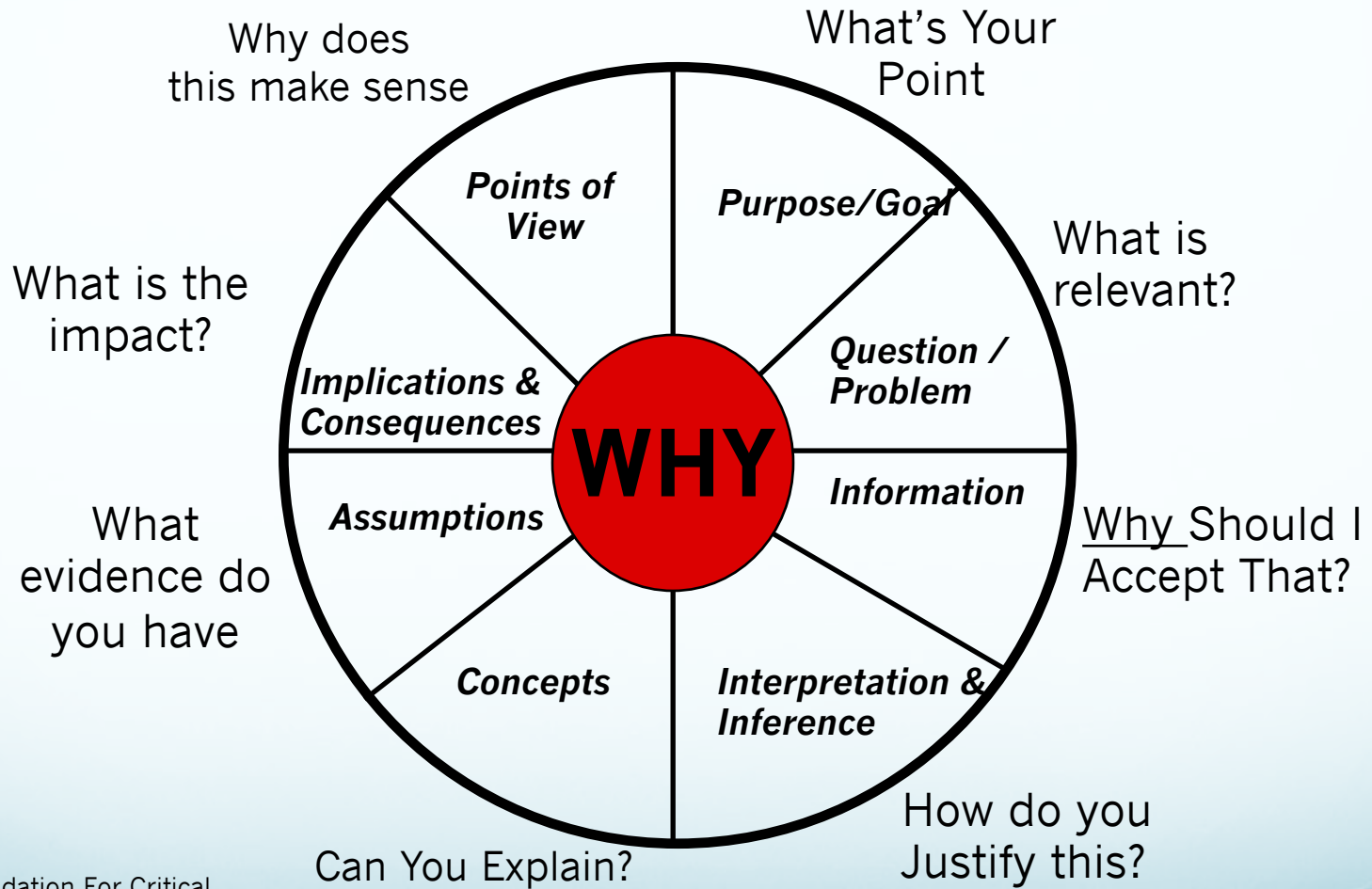
Useful Questions

- ✓ "What's your purpose?"

- ✓ "What is important?" "WHY"

- ✓ "What information is needed?" "WHY"

- ✓ "Can you explain this?"

- ✓ "What am I taking for granted?"

- ✓ "What am I implying?" "WHY"

- ✓ "What is my point of view?" "WHY"

Target Areas

Why does this make sense

What's Your Point

Points of View

Purpose/Goal

What is relevant?

What is the impact?

Implications & Consequences

Question / Problem

WHY

Information

Assumptions

What evidence do you have

Why Should I Accept That?

Concepts

Interpretation & Inference

How do you Justify this?

Can You Explain?

Universal Intellectual Standards

Testing the quality of your thinking

Clarity	Could you elaborate further? Could you give me an example? Could you illustrate what you mean?
Accuracy	How could we check on that? How could we find out if that is true? How could we verify or test that?
Precision	Could you be more specific? Could you give me more details? Could you be more exact?
Relevance	How does that relate to the problem? How does that bear on the question? How does that help us with the issue?
Depth	What factors make this a difficult problem? What are some of the complexities of this question? What are some of the difficulties we need to deal with?
Breadth	Do we need to look at this from another perspective? Do we need to consider another point of view? Do we need to look at this in other ways?
Logic	Does all this make sense together? Does your first paragraph fit in with your last? Does what you say follow from the evidence?
Significance	Is this the most important problem to consider? Is this the central idea to focus on? Which of these facts are most important?
Fairness	Do I have any vested interest in this issue? Am I sympathetically representing the viewpoints of others?

Critical Thinking & Communication

✓ What is communication?

✓ Why do we communicate?

✓ How do we apply critical thinking in conversation?

✓ How do we apply critical thinking to presentations?

So . . .

- ✓ Critical Thinking is central to your competence, regardless of your job or position

- ✓ You must PRACTICE critical thinking skills—they don't happen by accident

- ✓ If not now, when? If not here, where? If not you, who?

Make better decisions

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CRITICAL THINKING
CONCEPTS & TOOLS

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Richard Paul & Linda Elder